



Infantry leaders discuss proposing changes

Lance Cpl. Brian A. Marion
Combat Correspondent

FORD ISLAND, Hawaii — U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific held an Infantry Total Force Structure Review and 0369 (Infantry Unit Leader) Operations Chief Conference at the Navy Lodge here April 14 through 18.

The conference brought nearly 30 operations chiefs and the infantry monitor together to share their experience and do a systematic review of the infantry billets.

“We brought everyone here to sit down, talk about issues we’ve been seeing and to better our [military occupational specialty],” said Master Gunnery Sgt. Vincent Griffin, operations chief, G-3, MarForPac. “We are here for our younger Marines. To get them better training and equipment so they’ll have the tools to be successful in their careers.”

One issue the senior leaders discussed included on-the-job training for lance corporals

See **LEADERS, A-5**



Lance Cpl. Brian A. Marion

Colonel Duffy White, commanding officer, 3rd Marine Regiment, stands with operations chiefs representing various units in the U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific during an Infantry Total Force Structure Review and 0369 (infantry unit leader) Operations Chief Conference in the Navy Lodge on Ford Island April 14 through 18.



Cpl. Chadwick deBree

A Marine with Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, watches over a crowd as an Iraqi Policeman checks identification cards during a cooperative medical engagement April 13, in Karma, Iraq. The Marines, alongside Iraqi Security Forces, provided security for the event while patients were seen by Iraqi doctors.

Hawaii-based Marines provide medical care

Cpl. Chadwick deBree
Combat Correspondent

KARMA, Iraq — A convoy of humvees, 7-ton trucks and mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles pulled up to a sheik’s home. As they arrived, local citizens, already lined up, waited outside the gate to receive aid through the teamwork of the local government, Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition forces.

On April 12 and 13, Marines with 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, alongside Iraqi doctors, con-

ducted a cooperative medical engagement to provide medical care to Iraqi civilians in the Gnather and Lahib villages.

On the first day, Iraqis eagerly waited as Marines from Company F admitted them one at a time to maintain security and organization. Upon going through the gates, the Iraqis would receive a number to help keep track of how many people showed up. They stood in line outside a room where Iraqi doctors listened to their complaints and examined

See **CARE, A-5**

Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff visits Kaneohe Bay

Lance Cpl. Regina A. Ruisi
Community Relations NCO

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and his wife visited here Monday, to tour various facilities on base and visit with the Marines of Wounded Warriors Company, 3rd Marine Regiment.

Marine General James E. Cartwright arrived at Hangar 105, and was greeted by K-Bay’s Chief of Staff, Christopher Blanchard, and taken to the Officer’s Club for lunch. There he met up with his wife, who had already been on base touring the Family Team Building Office, base library, the child development center and meeting with the base’s Key Volunteer Network.

“I came out to visit Pacific Command and do my annual visit,” Cartwright said. “We took today to visit the bases, the hospitals and see the training areas on the other islands to get a sense of the needs here. It was kind of a fact finding trip.”

After lunch and a meeting with his staff at the Officer’s Club, Cartwright visited the Wounded Warrior’s barracks and met with the Marines, showing his gratitude for their sacrifices.

“I’m glad he’s coming out to visit the Marines and Sailors here,” said Staff Sgt. Dennis Gilbert, staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge, Wounded Warriors Company. “The Marines are excited he’s coming, someone so high

up in the food chain.”

Cartwright and his wife toured the facilities, stopping in one room to visit a wounded Marine who just had surgery. They saw the updates done to the barracks, including larger doorways and bathrooms made for wheelchair accessibility. They asked Marines about their daily schedules and care they receive. They then met with 10 Marines in the Wounded Warriors lounge.

“We’re having a good response from the Wounded Warriors,” Cartwright said. “There was only 10 people in there, that means the population is down. Hopefully

See **VISIT, A-4**

Embedded Training Team 1-9 honors fallen

Lance Cpl. Brian A. Marion
Combat Correspondent

Embedded Training Team 1-9 honored fallen comrades Sgt. Phillip Bocks and Petty Officer 3rd Class Mark Cannon during a remembrance ceremony at the Base Chapel here Friday.

More than 100 family members, Marines and Sailors attended the ceremony before heading to the Pacific War Memorial where their families received a Hawaii Medal of Honor.

“We come here today to honor two of our fallen comrades,” said Cmdr. Kalas McAlexander, chaplain, Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment.

The ceremony first honored Bocks who was born March 1, 1979. The Avon Township, Mich., native reported to Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C., on May 22, 2000.

“He was a friend, a loving son, and he was a great Marine,” said Sgt. Andrew Ethridge, Afghanistan National Army ETT team staff



Lance Cpl. Brian A. Marion

Tom Cannon accepts a Hawaii Medal of Honor on behalf of his son, Petty Officer 3rd Class Mark Cannon, at the Pacific War Memorial here Friday. Mark Cannon served as the lead corpsman for Embedded Training Team 5-2 while they were deployed to Afghanistan.

non-commissioned officer, ETT 1-9. “Anyone who has had the honor and privilege to have met Phillip has had their lives touched.”

After recruit training, Bocks went to the Infantry Training Battalion, School of Infantry – East, Camp Lejeune, N.C., and later reported to Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, serving as a

team leader and squad leader.

“He made me want to be a better Marine and a better friend,” Ethridge said.

During his time in 1/3, Bocks completed a deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and one in the Unit Deployment Program to Camp Hansen, Okinawa.

Bocks later transferred to

the Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, Calif., where he served as a mountain warfare instructor.

In March 2007, Bocks volunteered and was assigned to ANA ETT 1-9, initially serving as an advisor, mentor and trainer for the 1st Company, 3rd Kandak, 3rd Brigade, ANA.

See **FALLEN, A-5**

— NEWS BRIEFS —

Marine Corps League

The Marines Corps League, Aloha Detachment, is encouraging Marines, Fleet Marine Force corpsmen and anyone who has the desire to preserve the traditions and promote the interest of the U.S. Marine Corps to join the Aloha Detachment on Oahu. For more information, contact John Ah Chick at 227-9115 or 261-9693.

Waikulu Pride Day

Forest City Residential Management is inviting the residents of the Waikulu neighborhood to join in "Waikulu Pride Day," on Thursday for a neighborhood-wide community clean-up effort. We strongly encourage all Waikulu residents to participate, even if you're just home an hour for lunch. Forest City is requesting your cooperation in preparing for the event. For more information, contact the resident services office at 839-8700.

BayFest 2008

Tickets for the 19th Annual BayFest 2008 go on sale for the general public Saturday beginning at 9 a.m. Two types of tickets will be available for the event: the BayFest ticket, which allows one-day access to the carnival fairgrounds, contest, military static displays and the Island Lifestyle Exposition. The all-inclusive ticket, which provides patrons with the same one-day access as the BayFest ticket, will also include concert admission. This year's lineup will include Rodney Atkins, Everclear, Little Big Town, Live and 3 Doors Down. Tickets are available at Ticketmaster or your local Information, Tickets and Tours office. For more information, contact your local ITT office or Marine Corps Community Services.

Pacific War Memorial Association

Bricks will soon be placed around the Pacific War Memorial located at the front gate. Order forms are available at the gatehouse, or Online at <http://www.pacificwarmemorial.org>. The forms must be postmarked no later than Thursday. For more information, contact the association at 533-3759.

Channel 2 Survey

Combat Camera is conducting a survey to gather information about usage of the Base Commander's Channel, Channel 2. Combat Camera is using the information to improve the service in order to better serve the base community. For more information, call Gunnery Sgt. Schellenbach at 257-1365, or to take the survey visit <http://ice.disa.mil/svy.cfm?channel2>.

CLICK IT or TICKET

Hawaii Marine urges its readers to buckle up. It's an easy habit to learn that some day may save your life and the life of your passenger(s). Remember, each and every time you get into your vehicle, reach for your seatbelt. Make it one of those good habits that you won't want to break.

Important Phone Numbers:

On-Base Emergencies	911
Military Police	257-7114
Child Protective Service	832-5300
Fraud, Waste, Abuse & EEO	257-8852
Business Management Hotline	257-3188
Pothole & Streetlight Repair	257-2380
Base Information	449-7110
MCBH Duty Chaplain	257-7700
DEERS	257-2077

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Chaplain's Corner

Strengthening Marriage

Navy Lt. Brandon Harding
Base Chaplain

In the Hebrew Scriptures in the book of Genesis we read about the first marriage performed on the earth. At the end of creation, when God had prepared everything for humankind, his first act was to join man and woman together. In Genesis 2:24 we read, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." As individuals, we have separate passions, personalities, quirks and emotions. These are things that have the potential to create distance rather than the oneness referred to in Genesis. The great purpose of marriage is to become one with our spouse. Thankfully, we have a whole lifetime to work on it. Therefore, don't be too discouraged when challenges arise that pull us apart from our spouse. The following are important considerations in developing strength in your marriage and living up to the Lord's expectation as stated in Genesis.

1. Nurturing your marital friendship is vital to your unity. Friendship is the cement that will hold your marriage together. If you ever lose your friendship, you will be in danger of having your marriage come to an end. How do you continue to cultivate your friendship? Continue your courtship. Keep doing those things that made you fall in love. Too many couples stop dating or courting after they're married. Commit now to set aside at least one night a week to have a date. These can be cheap dates. Walks on the beach at sunset are free and always romantic.
2. Constantly update your knowledge of your spouse. The amount you know about your spouse is called a "Love Map." This is essentially the amount of room you have allocated in your brain for your spouse. The bigger your map, the better your marriage will be. If your love map becomes outdated, your relationship will begin to suffer. People change, especially during deployments. Ask your spouse, "What was the most difficult

- part of the last deployment?"
3. One of the most important things I have learned is it's the little things that count. Find some way every day to show your spouse that you not only love them, but you actually like them. The little things you do on a daily basis will build up good will between you. This good will has been described as an emotional bank account. The little things we do to show care for our spouse make deposits into the account. You will need lots of deposits because at some point all of us do things that will harm the relationship. These are like withdrawals. Like in finance, it's very important to stay out of the red.
 4. Shower each other with affection — touch, hold, kiss, wrestle (no pile drives) and hug. These and other demonstrations of affection are essential. For men, your displays of affection will mean much more if they happen during daylight hours.
 5. The final and most important thing I would share with you is to develop a routine of praying with each other at the end of each day. You may have



HARDING

heard the statement, "the couple that prays together stays together." This is something I have witnessed make a profound difference in the couples I have counseled and in my own marriage. At the end of each day, take each other's hands and kneel in prayer and ask God to bless your marriage. Commit now to do this every night and the Lord will bless you. As you follow the points listed above, I promise your marriage will be strengthened. You and your spouse will develop a great degree of unity and will fulfill the Lord's vision of marriage, becoming one.

Iraqi role players here to aid training

Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantarliotis
Combat Correspondent

In an endless pursuit to provide the most realistic and beneficial training for service members about to deploy, Marine Corps Base Hawaii temporarily housed 50 role players of Iraqi ethnicity here, from April 16 to 24. The role players are all American citizens and have undergone extensive security screening, said Daniel Geltmacher, MCBH Range Manager, G-3. The Iraqi role players trained with Marines at the recently constructed Military Operations on Urban Terrain facility at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, further advancing the realism of the training. "We've been doing it since 2006," Geltmacher said. "Back then they were at Schofield Barracks for a battalion deployment. As soon as we built our facility we got the capability to do it. Days after it finished, we had the first group of role players training with Marines." Geltmacher said the community had no need to worry living among the Iraqi role players. "As long as I understood why, I wouldn't be worried," said Jeanne Peters, a family member from San Diego. "Anything we can do to promote the Marines' understanding of [the culture], then I think it should be done. But, if I didn't know why there were a group of Iraqis on base, I could see how people might be a little worried." "They will be dressed in typical American clothing," Geltmacher said. "They will also have Marines escorting them wherever they go on base." The role players all have ties to Iraq, but now call the U.S. home. "Some of them were born in Iraq and then moved to America at a young age, and others grew up there," Geltmacher said. "They all know the language and customs though, which is what benefits the Marines

during the training. Marines might not know unintended offenses, cultural differences and language — that's going to help them greatly. We don't want the first time they interact with Iraqis to be in Iraq, a hostile environment." The role players worked 12-hour days at the MOUT facility and helped Marines with after action reports, dealing with common conflicts and teaching what to be cautious of, Geltmacher said. "They'll be interacting with them, eating chow with them, talking with them," he

explained. "They'll get familiar with them and learn as much as they can. It's a different culture, and the more they know about it, the better off they are." It's definitely a step forward, said 1st Lt. Chris Buttry, platoon commander, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Division. "It takes away that level of nervousness [Marines] might have," said Buttry. "The Iraqi role players will have females and that's a big issue. Dealing with the females in Iraq is a real shaky subject, and the more they deal with them, the less they might unintentionally offend anyone." The MCB Hawaii community had no reason to worry and should be enthusiastic the Marine Corps takes every possible measure to contribute toward the training of the world's most dangerous fighting force. These American citizens are helping their fellow Americans by sharing what they know to help stabilize their country of origin, and make the U.S. presence in Iraq no longer than necessary.

“ Anything we can do to promote the Marines’ understanding of [the culture], then I think it should be done. — Jeanne Peters ”



Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantarliotis
Iraqi role players conduct training exercises with 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, April 16, at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows. The role players are American citizens who are fluent in the language and culture of Iraq.

Weekend weather outlook

Today

Day — Scattered showers, mainly before noon. Partly cloudy, with a high near 78. North wind around 8 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent.

Night — Scattered showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 71. Northeast wind around 13 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent.

High — 78

Low — 71

Saturday

Day — Scattered showers. Partly cloudy, with a high near 80. East wind around 11 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent.

Night — Scattered showers. Partly cloudy, with a low around 72. East wind around 11 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent.

High — 80

Low — 72

Sunday

Day — Scattered showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 80. East wind around 13 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent.

Night — Scattered showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 69. East wind around 16 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent.

High — 80

Low — 69

Iraqis on island

Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantarliotis
Combat Correspondent

MARINE CORPS TRAINING AREA BELLAWS, Hawaii — Armed with SKS semi-automatic carbines, 9 mm handguns, cell-phones and shave-neglected faces, the terrorists laughed as they waited for their American intruders to stroll by.

Embedded Iraqi interpreters walked among cautious Marines on a dismounted patrol, as they inspected each car that approached them with surgical precision, unaware of the extremists lurking ahead.

The interpreters' attempts to laugh and joke with their tobacco-lipped escorts left a dense fog of awkwardness surrounding them. Their apprehension apparten as cultures collided, a level of misunderstanding was expected, with neither side naturally trusting the other. Their differences separated them like the seas divided their countries.

While a meeting with a local official occurred, rifle rounds shattered the town's ambience of locals playing and women chatting, spreading panic throughout the people, and suspicion into the Marines. The Marines quickly took cover, firing and maneuvering to close in on the enemy.

"Train like it's the real thing" is a motto 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment embodied, when employing Iraqi role players fluent in Arabic and middle-eastern culture to foster realism, during Operation Lava Flow, an eight-day squad training exercise at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows last week.

"Each company spends two days on a '48-hour deployment,'" said 1st Lt. Mike Deredita, assistant operations officer, 1/3. "We're trying to get them from a kinetic to a non-kinetic mindset, getting them to react and think on the move. We set up typical scenarios that Marines deal with in Iraq so they can start getting used to it, and since we have the role players, they act and speak just like they would in Iraq."

While many Marines might not sense suspicion or distrust between all of the Marines and Iraqis, interpreter or not, Deredita said a big problem in Iraq is the huge difference in cultures and customs. A Marine might unintentionally offend a local and create more problems than necessary, a problem the Iraqi role players also help smooth out by talking to the Marines and answering any questions they have, he said.

The role players, U.S. citizens who were either born in Iraq or grew up there, were supportive of the training and offered any help they could give to the Marines.

"I do this to help Marines bring democracy and stable government to Iraq," said a role player (whose name is withheld for security purposes.) "The citizens of Iraq all hope for democracy, and I try to help so Marines can come home to their families. I try to

teach Marines to be friendly and respectful to the Iraqi people, because if they are respected they will respect back, if someone bang on door and they see aggressive, they will be aggressive. The biggest problem they might have there is cultural difference, but I try very hard to help them understand. I like the Marines, they are good people ... they always protect me and help me. I trust them."

While Marines will encounter Iraqi role players at the Mojave Viper Exercise, the more they work with them and train with them, the better, Deredita said.

"It's set up like Mojave Viper," Deredita explained, "We'll have a set of 'plays' they'll go through, like a guy driving through an [entry control point] fast because he's bringing his wife to the hospital. Marines can only provide so much as role players with their blouses inside-out. [The role players] speak the language – they look like the real deal."

Marines also trained in dismounted patrols, squad tactics, Military Operations in Urban Terrain, cache sweeps, convoy operations and reacting to snipers during Operation Lava Flow, ensuring Marines are ready for Mojave Viper, and ultimately - Iraq, Deredita said.

The Marines trained like they were in country, and gathered as much experience and information as they could from Marines who've already been to Iraq, as well as the Iraqi role players.

"It's pretty good training," said Lance Cpl. Tony Hearton, rifleman, Headquarters and Service Company, 1/3. "You got actual Iraqi's doing it with the Marines; it helps, and gets you ready for deployment."

1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment is scheduled to train at Mojave Viper in June, and will relieve 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment in Iraq this fall.



Marines rest and regroup in less than welcoming quarters, part of the kinetic mentality stressed during training to get Marines in a combat mindset.

1/3 completes 8-day training exercise



Lance Cpl. Daniel Kempe, section leader, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, oversees Marines inspecting vehicles and passengers at an entry control point during Operation Lava Flow, a training exercise, April 15, at MCTAB.



An Iraqi interpreter pats down a motorist as Marines provide security. The interpreters are familiar with the culture and language, enabling them to reassure motorists and quickly search them.



Marines use a sign instructing vehicles to stop and await further instructions at the entry control point. The sign is one of the many ways 1/3 made Operation Lava Flow as realistic as possible.



Photos by Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantarliotis

Marines on a dismounted patrol exercise halt an oncoming vehicle, inspecting and searching it before allowing it to continue April 16, a common procedure in Iraq at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows.

Hawaii’s ready to show military appreciation

Sgt. Scott Whittington
U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific

HONOLULU — As the fighting continues in Iraq and Afghanistan, and troops rotate on and off the islands, the people of Hawaii continue to show their support. So much so, they’ve dedicated a month to show how much they care.

This year marks the 23rd Annual Hawaii Military Appreciation Month, and it kicked off Thursday with opening ceremonies at the Battleship Missouri Memorial on Ford Island. Representatives from each branch of service attended. The Honorable Linda Lingle, governor of Hawaii, Adm. Timothy J. Keating, commander U.S. Pacific Command, and other distinguished guests spoke at the event.

“We are honored to pay tribute to our military and the vital role it plays in preserving the stability and quality of life in our state, our nation and the Pacific Region,” said Al Landon, chairman and CEO, Bank of Hawaii, in a message to the military.

“Mayor (Mufi) Hannemann fully understands the sacrifices and commitment that our Armed Forces provide for the safety and well being of all Americans, and on a personal note, Mayor Hannemann is grateful for the service personnel and dependents who are stationed in Honolulu,” said Dana Takahara-Dias, deputy director, Department of Enterprise Services.

Several of Hawaii’s food

service companies had tents set up and provided free food and drinks to show their thanks to the military.

“I felt honored to be there last year and represent the Marine Corps,” said Lance Cpl. Ryan Kernan, administration clerk, S-1, Headquarters and Service Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific. “I really liked that they appreciate us.”

Hawaii’s Chamber of Commerce and other local businesses hosted the ceremony and coordinated some incentives for the military and their families to include the Combined Military Band concert at the Blaisdell Concert Hall on May 16, the Living History Day at the Hawaii Army Museum at Fort DeRussy on May 17 and the USO Military Day at the Honolulu Zoo June 28. Last year, more than 8,000 service members and their families took advantage of the free visit to the zoo.

On May 22, event sponsors will recognize an outstanding service member from each branch of the armed services and the Hawaii chapter of the Military Officers Association of America will honor one of its members for outstanding community service at the Military Recognition Luncheon at the Hilton Hawaiian Village. During the luncheon, the attendees will celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Pearl Harbor Naval Pacific Fleet.

“Before I got here, I had heard rumors that the military wasn’t really accepted here but that’s not the case,”

said Cpl. Casey Atkinson, dispatcher, motor transportation, MarForPac, who attended last year’s opening ceremony. “It’s pretty cool that Hawaii wants to thank us.”

Hawaii is home to the largest combatant command in the world – Pacific Command. Also, the Pacific headquarters for all four armed services and the U.S. Coast Guard are located here. With approximately 40,000 active, reserve and national guardsmen, 18,000 military civilians, 55,000 family members and 120,000 retired military living and working on Hawaii’s islands, they all play a major role in the state’s economy, according to the Chamber of Commerce Web site. According to Charlie Ota, vice president for military affairs, Hawaii Chamber of Commerce, the military spends \$5.6 billion a year in Hawaii in defense expenses.

“It makes a tremendous impact,” Ota said. “The military also makes contributions to local charities.” Ota mentioned the Big Brother, Big Sisters Program, the Great Aloha Run and the Adopt-a-School Program in which the military plays a supporting role.

Although the month of May is set aside to recognize the military, Hawaiians show their gratitude throughout the entire year. A number of businesses give military discounts equal to the kama’ aina (long-time resident) and support Information Tickets and Travel centers here, according to Ota.



Sgt. Scott Whittington

Mayor Mufi Hannemann, of the City and County of Honolulu, speaks to military service members and guests about sacrifices made by American service members every day during the opening ceremony of the 22nd Annual Hawaii Military Appreciation Month held April 2007 at the Pacific Aviation Museum on Pearl Harbor’s Ford Island. "I know I speak for the 500,000 people who call Honolulu home, thank you," said Hannemann to the nearly 500 service members in attendance, including the highest ranking member in the Pacific, Navy Adm. Timothy J. Keating, commander, U.S. Pacific Command.



Photos by Lance Cpl. Regina A. Ruizi

General James Cartwright, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, shakes hands with and presents his coin to a wounded Marine in the Wounded Warriors Company, 3rd Marine Regiment, Monday. Cartwright met each of the wounded Marines, asking them about their injuries and goals for the future.

VISIT, from A-1

it will stay that way. I’m here to make sure they get the care they need, that the Marine Corps is taking care of them.”

There, Cartwright spoke to each Marine individually, asking about their injuries, their goals for the future (whether in or out of the Marine Corps), progress on their medical boards and even a little bit about their recent hunting trip.

“It’s important for the higher ups to see how far the Wounded Warriors Company has come and where we’re going with it,” said Petty Officer 3rd Class Devin Kelly, Wounded Warriors Company, who was a corpsman with 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, when he was hit by an improvised explosive device in Iraq. “It’s nice to have higher-ups come out and show support for the warriors and the company.”

Cartwright presented each of the wounded Marines with his coin, shaking each hand and thanking them personally for their service, wishing them the best of luck in their future Marine Corps careers or in the civilian world.

“The Marines want to get back to the Marine Corps,” Cartwright said of the company’s Marines. “One, it’s in their ethos, their desire to get back and contribute and keep contributing. That’s a wonderful part of the life of an

American fighting person. We call them ‘Wounded Warriors,’ but the truth is they’re warriors. They don’t want to be wounded forever, they want to get back and contribute.”

After visiting the Marines, Cartwright and his wife left MCB Hawaii to visit Tripler Army Hospital to see the care given to Hawaii’s service members and their families.



General James Cartwright, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, talks to Marines of Wounded Warriors Company, 3rd Marine Regiment, during his base visit Monday. Cartwright and his wife toured the Wounded Warriors barracks, and other facilities on base.

Snake report sends hunters into bush to avert crisis

Alexandre Da Silva
Honolulu Star Bulletin

State search teams were hunting for a snake spotted early April 16 at Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe that fits the description of the brown tree snake, which could ravage Hawaii’s native plants and animals and hurt the state’s economy.

A base resident reported seeing a 2-foot, greenish-brown snake at 7:30 a.m. Wednesday. Search crews have set up traps with mice and combed the area at night, but a snake has not been found, state Department of Agriculture spokeswoman Janelle Saneishi said yesterday afternoon.

"It seems like a credible sighting," Saneishi said, adding that searches would continue for at least two weeks. "She saw the tail end. The person didn't actually see the head."

The sighting coincided with an annual Brown Treesnake Working Group Technical Meeting in Waikiki this week that is being attended by experts from Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands and the mainland.

Among topics discussed are military growth on Guam and the need for more inspection and regulations of cargo planes there to prevent the spread of brown tree snakes to Hawaii.

Eight brown tree snakes have been found alive or dead in Hawaii since the mid-1980s -- all in cargo from Guam, according to Hawaii's Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species, which includes representatives from state and federal governments and other organizations.

The group is concerned

that some \$6 million in federal funding that includes money for inspection of military cargo leaving Guam continues to be based on congressional add-ons, or earmarks, to the budget.

For example, funds to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services last year came only after the agency had lost five dog handlers who conducted snake checks, Martin said.

"It is not permanent funding; it's year-to-year funding," she said. "We need to make sure that this gets institutionalized. That's our first line of defense."

Her concern was echoed by Domingo Cravalho Jr., Plant Quarantine Inspection and Compliance Section chief for the state Agriculture Department, who said Wednesday's incident "underscores the importance of continued federal funding of snake inspection and interdiction programs in Guam, Hawaii and throughout the Pacific."

A new study has found that Hawaii could lose \$2 billion in tourist travel if brown tree snakes were to become established in the state, an impact much

greater than the \$405 million previously estimated by a University of Hawaii study, Martin said.

"Basically, tourists would choose a different destination," Martin said about the study's findings, which the group expects to release soon.

The brown tree snake, a native of Australia, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, was introduced to Guam in the late 1940s or early 1950s, with devastating consequences. The snakes wiped out nine of the 12 native forest birds and two of 11 native lizards on Guam, and have contributed to the decline of native fruit bats.

The snakes also are responsible for an average of 200 power failures per year, and snakebites are the cause of approximately 1 in 1,200 emergency room visits on Guam.

People should not approach a snake if they encounter one, but the state encourages people to kill it as long as they do not put themselves at risk.

"If not, someone can keep an eye on it and then call us," Saneishi said.

The state's pest hot line is 643-PEST.



Courtesy photo

A base resident reported seeing a 2-foot, greenish-brown snake at 7:30 a.m. April 16.



Cpl. Chadwick deBree

Iraqi children line up outside the house where medical doctors examine patients to help cure what is bothering them during a cooperative medical engagement April 12, in Karma, Iraq. The event occurred over a two-day period, with approximately 370 people showing up the first day.

CARE, from A-1

them to help identify their problem.

“Most of the people had upper respiratory tract infections, malnutrition, stomach problems from drinking dirty water and skin infections,” said Dr. Ali Karagoli, an Iraqi medical doctor. “I’m Iraqi so I know what the main complaints are going to be. I look them over to see how severe their condition is and prescribe them medicine to help make them healthy again.”

After being examined by one of three doctors, the patients went into the next room where they received the medicine they were prescribed. The battalion also passed out toys, clothes and school supplies to the children who attended.

The whole event came together when the Marines attended a city council meeting where the subject of health care was brought up, and the battalion commander wanted to give two days to

help provide medical care for the civilians, said Capt. J.C. Lang, commanding officer, Company E, 2/3.

“It turned out how we expected it to turn out,” Lang said. “We had a little less than 500 people show up today. This is what the Iraqis expected of their government. They expected someone to help take care of them and provide medical care. All Echo Company did today was provide security.”

“The mission here, our mission, is transition,” Lang said. “We want to show the Iraqis that we are not an occupying force, but that we are genuine in helping them and seeking the best for them. This event today isn’t a photo-op so a movie star can come gain publicity or anything. This is our job here; this is what we do. I expected we would have a sweaty afternoon today and we did. Everyone out here today is willing to work hard to help the Iraqi people get the attention that they need.

One thing that I have noticed is that the units that are accepted out here and successful, are the ones that work with the culture, and that’s what we are doing. The transition is moving full steam ahead.”

As the second day of the CME came to a close, Karagoli reflected on the two-day event as a success.

“This is the first time I have done a CME with this unit and everything went well and it was well organized,” he said. “This event is very helpful for the Iraqi people because the medical is free for them (during the event). This is very important to the people because there aren’t many clinics open or supplies in the area. I know that the people are grateful for events like this because it shows them the coalition does care about them.”

The Hawaii-based unit is currently deployed to Iraq to help transition authority back to the Iraqi people.

LEADERS, from A-1

and corporals who are being put in leadership positions.

“What we’re having are battalions deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan, and when they get there, young lieutenants and some of the senior leadership are tasked out to other jobs, leaving sergeants and below to step into those senior leadership positions,” said Master Gunnery Sgt. Robert French, operations chief, training, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force. “It’s putting these corporals and lance corporals who’ve been fire team leaders and putting them in charge of a squad when they’re over there.”

The current operational tempo is so intense commands may not be able to send every Marine to school for training, French said. But for Marines who do get the training, they’re trained in weapon systems other than their own. When units participate at pre-deployment training locations like the Pohakuloa Training Area on the Big Island, the units usually have designated Marines who call for air support or fire support. This means, although the Marines received the training, they haven’t been able to get on-the-job training needed to gain experience.

“Leadership is a learnable trait,” French said. “Leaders aren’t born. We came here to make changes that directly affect infantry Marines Marine Corps wide and influence Marines in all MOSSs. If we come up with half a dozen agenda items and only one gets acted upon, then we’ve made progress.”

One proposal brought up will impact Marines coming to the end of their first term.

“Our goal is to evaluate where we are, where we want to go and to motivate and keep well-trained people in the Corps,” said Master Gunnery Sgt. Joseph Haggins, operations chief, training, III Marine Expeditionary Force. “We are looking at our deployment cycle and how it affects the reenlistment cycle, and the units.”

The proposal would allow infantry Marines to reenlist for five years with a squad leader option. They would go to a B billet, a short-term duty assignment, for two years, spend the next year training in various schools, then spend the last two years in the fleet, gaining experience.

“We have to get personnel into the right places,” said Master Gunnery Sgt. Carlos Graig, operations chief, S-3, 3rd Marine Regiment. “This is a small unit leader’s war, and a lot of corporals and sergeants are holding platoon sergeant billets.”

With conflicts ongoing in Iraq and Afghanistan, and with the Corps still increasing in size, the challenges placed on young Marines continue to grow.

“We live in an exciting time,” said Col. Duffy White, commanding officer, 3rd Marine Regiment. “We’re growing and adapting while in a fight. With the growth of our forces, the things we ask our squad leaders to do increases. Our task is to provide them with the training they need to mature and lead Marines.”

FALLEN, from A-1

Ethridge remembers one time when the team conducted a mounted patrol when they came under attack, with his vehicle being cut off from the rest.

“My vehicle was in the lead and [Phillip’s] was in the rear,” Ethridge said.

Ethridge called for help, and Bocks came from the back of the patrol and headed toward the front.

“On the way up to me, he started to pass our doc and lieutenant,” Ethridge said. “He stopped and said, ‘Hey guys. Need a ride?’ He picked them up and headed toward me when I needed him the most.”

Ethridge wasn’t the only one who shared feelings for his fallen brother-in-arms.

“He was stubborn, hard headed, arrogant and pig headed,” said Staff Sgt. Ronald Forristal, ANA ETT team staff noncommissioned officer, ETT 1-9. “But all that didn’t matter. It didn’t matter how bad things would be out there. [Bocks] would always be there for you. As we remember [Phillip], don’t hang your heads and cry. Lift your heads up and shed a tear and smile. Don’t disappoint him.”

Bocks lost his life on November 9, 2007, while ETT 1-9 was reassigned to 2nd Company, 2nd Kandak, 3rd Brigade, ANA.

“[Bocks] was always there to brighten us up,” Ethridge said. “I will always remember his wits, his sarcasm and jokes.”

The Corps also lost a fel-

low shipmate during ETT 1-9’s last deployment. Cannon was also memorialized.

Cannon was born on November 21, 1975, in Texas. He enlisted into the Navy on February 3, 2003, after leaving his job as a nurse’s aid at Covenant Medical Center, Lubbock, Texas.

After completing Navy basic training, Cannon went to the Navy Hospital Corps School, Great Lakes, Ill., and the Field Medical Training Battalion, Camp Pendleton, Calif., before reporting for duty at 3rd Marine Regiment.

“Every corpsman’s mission during his time in the Navy is to make a decision,” said Seaman Apprentice James

Holbrook, corpsman, ETT 1-9. “They make a decision to go green or to stay blue. You stay blue and you go to ships and hospitals. You go green and you fall to the dark side of the Marine Corps. You choose to put away your blue and wear the green of the Marine Corps. Marines don’t see you as corpsman. They give you the name ‘doc,’ which every corpsman wants to hear.”

This warm-hearted corpsman served numerous positions within the regiment, including serving as a line platoon corpsman with 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“Mark might have been a big man, but his heart was even bigger than he was,” Holbrook said. “You weren’t just a Marine or Sailor, you were someone to him. He

could make you laugh about anything and he was there when you needed him.”

Cannon was recently assigned to ETT 5-2 as the lead corpsman during

Operation Enduring Freedom where he gave his life to aid a fallen comrade.

“He was more than just a friend of mine,” Holbrook said. “He’s my brother.”

AROUND THE CORPS

Field Test 24th MEU sharpens sights in Afghanistan

Cpl. Alex C. Guerra
24th MEU

KANDAHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan — The 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit tested the new Target Location, Designation, Hand-off System, called the StrikeLink, outside friendly lines here, April 12.

This marks the first time a MEU, and only the second time ever a unit has used this device in a combat environment.

StrikeLink is a digital targeting system that provides forward air controllers, forward operators and reconnaissance teams the ability to observe and quickly acquire battlefield targets for indirect fire and close air support in almost any weather condition.

“The Marine Corps determined they needed a digital fire-support capability,” said Maj. Brian J. Newbold, liaison officer, Marine Corps Systems Command. “SYSCOM hired Stauder Technologies to develop and build the system. (For more than a year) it went through testing and safety inspections. After waiting for it to be validated as a legitimate piece of gear, we are at the last step in the process – field testing.”

The 24th MEU (along with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment) seemed ideal to receive and employ the system because of their upcoming combat operations in Afghanistan, said Maj. Philip A. Williams, air officer, 24th MEU, NATO-International Security Assistance Force.

Stauder Technologies dispatched technicians to Afghanistan to teach Marines about operation and maintenance of the system for use in upcoming missions.

“I want to see StrikeLink utilized by Marines as effectively and efficiently as it was designed to, which is to take out the enemy,” said Jim J. Davey, training instructor, Stauder Technologies.

The hand-off system allows observers and controllers to paint a better picture of the battlefield than the human eye alone ever allowed.

Compared to what was used in the past; it’s night and day,” said Capt. Ryan B. Ward, AV-8B Weapons Tactics Instructor, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 365 (Reinforced), 24th MEU, ISAF. “In the past, we were using binoculars, compasses and maps to plot out a target, and then send the coordinates via radio. That method really hasn’t changed since the Vietnam War.”

“Now, we use digital binoculars that give the distance and range of a target and transmits that information through StrikeLink directly to aircraft or artillery batteries,” said Newbold, an AV-8B Harrier pilot by trade. “The system completely reduces human error and time.”

In addition to being an efficient communication tool, the system is able to side step some of the enemy’s countermeasures.

“In an environment where we could have an enemy trying to jam our signal or listen into our transmission, this process is all done in a manner

where the enemy can’t listen to what we are doing and has no idea of what is going on,” said Ward.

Among the host of new features the StrikeLink offers, scout observers never lose sight of what matters most.

“This piece of gear is to support the ground troops,” Staff Sgt. David S. Baldock, artillery liaison chief, Headquarters Platoon, Weapons Company, BLT 1/6, 24th MEU, NATO-ISAF. “When an infantryman is taking fire, he needs that support fast. We’re not talking about minutes to get that support; we’re talking seconds he wants that support.”

“Anytime I can save minutes on the battlefield, it is lives saved.”



Cpl. Alex C. Guerra

A forward observer from Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, NATO-International Security Assistance Force, pin points his next target on the new Target Location, Designation, and Hand-off System during a live-fire mortar range in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan. The 24th MEU is the first unit to use the TLDHS in a combat environment while in Afghanistan.